



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

GENERAL NOTES.

GEOGRAPHY AND TRAVEL.¹

ASIA.—INDO-CHINA.—M. de Lanessan, in a paper read before the Commercial Geographical Society of France, gives the area of French Indo-China at about 600,000 square kilometres. The Mekong, though the largest river of the peninsula, passes through a thinly peopled and almost uncultivated region until it enters Cambodia. The principal centres above this point are Luang-Prabang in the north; Nong-Kay, in the southward bend of the Mekong; Lakhone, in the rear of the Annamite provinces of Hatinh and Nghe-An, and largely colonised by Annamites; Bassac, in a navigable reach opposite to the mouth of the Se-Moum, which enters the Mekong from Central Siam; and Tsung-Treng, below the Khong rapids. The lower portion of the Mekong valley, that of the Donai, and the valleys of the numerous small rivers which descend on the eastern side of the mountains that separate Annam from the interior, are rich, cultivated, and well peopled. Tonquin has a veritable winter from October to March, characterised by heavy fogs and fine rain, but farther south the climate changes with the monsoons. Throughout the entire region the mountainous and wooded districts are less healthful than the rice-flats. Roads cannot be said to exist as yet, except immediately around some of the administrative centres. There is a costly railroad, on which as yet not a single car-load of merchandise has passed, from Saigon to Mytho. The Annamites in former times dug many canals, which though for awhile kept up by the French, are now almost entirely abandoned. The Donai is the only river of the region that can be entered by large vessels, and a coral bank obstructs even this. The Bay of Touraine, the port of the province of Quang-Nam, south of Hue, is a safe and ample harbor; and that of Ha-Long, in the north of Tonkin, seems to be equal to it.

According to Mr. McCarthy, Superintendent of Surveys in Siam, two spheres of influence, English and Siamese, are prominent in the Malay peninsula. The inhabitants of the northern portion are Siamese and Chinese, then come the SamSams, a mixture of Malays and Siamese, who are Buddhists and speak a mixed language; then the Malays, who are Mohammedans.

There are also two very curious tribes which are supposed to be aboriginal, called by the Malays "Orang Utann," or wild men,

¹ Edited by W. N. Lockington, Philadelphia, Pa.

and also known as Sakais and Samangs. The Sakai has soft black skin and wool; the Samang has also a very black skin, but the hair is coarse and straight, and the skin is rough. They wear no clothes, are clever in snaring fish and game, and use bows and arrows as well as blow-pipes for weapons.

KURDISTAN.—M. N. Binder recently described his travels in Kurdistan before the French Geographical Society. The name Kurdistan is given by the Turks to a collection of villages in the mountainous district separating Persia from Turkey, between 34° and 40° N. Latitude and 38° and 46° E. Longitude. Lakes Urmiah and Van are situated in the centre of immense table lands, the former, on account of its small depth and the extreme density of its waters, which are six times more saline than sea-water, does not seem to have a great future before it, but the latter lake offers many advantages. M. N. Binder traced the history of the Kurds, and referred to the current tradition that they have French blood in their veins. The variety of religions is the cause of infinite variety among the tribes. The sedentary and nomadic Kurds differ greatly in occupation and mode of life. The Subbas are a strange sect, with a religion composed of a mixture of gnostic and Christian ideas.

THE NEW SIBERIAN ISLANDS.—A recent number of Petermann's *Mitteilungen* contains a map of the new Siberian islands, giving the routes of Dr. Bunge, Baron Toll, Captain de Long, Nordenskiöld, etc. The principal islands are Ostrow Blischnij, Kotelnoi, Faddejewskoi, and East New Siberia.

North of these lie Bennett Land and Sannikow. Remains of the mammoth, narwhal (probably two species), horse, musk-ox, three kinds of deer, hare and seal were found upon the island of Ljachof (Ostrow Blischnij).

THE HITTITES.—It is probable that the renowned Hittite city Carchemish, is to be sought at the site of Jerablûs, from which the British Museum obtained a few years ago most of the Hittite monuments in its collection. The heads sculptured in these Jerablûs monuments are in many cases adorned with a queue or pig-tail identical in shape and position with that worn by the Chinese. The wearers of the pig-tail have Mongolian countenances, and it seems probable that a Mongolian race had obtained the supremacy in some of the Hittite cities.

AFRICA.—THE NIGER.—The French newspaper *Le Temps* contains an account of the voyage of the gunboat Niger from Bammako to Korium, the port of Timbuktu. The journey occupied three months. The Niger left Manambugu (thirty miles below Bammako) on July 1st, and twelve days later reached Diafarabu. Below

this point the country was unexplored, forming part of the States of Tidiani, the chief of Macina.

Bandiagara, Tidiani's capital, is a most important centre of the Mohammedan religion, the town resembling a huge convent. Farther down the river it became difficult to get provisions, since the natives had all retired into the interior. On July 9th, Lake Dheboë was entered, and was found to receive the river Koli-Koli, which waters the province of Formagha. Below Lake Dheboë the Niger takes the name of Bara Issa, and its banks are thickly lined with populous villages. Tidiani had issued strict orders to the Puls and Bambaras to have no communication with the French. The waters are shallow near Timbuktu, so that the gunboat could not proceed to the town. The *djemaa* or associations of merchants have been expelled two years before, and a chief named Rhiaia had been installed by the assistance of the Tuaregs. Knowing the perfidious character of the Tuaregs, the party slept on board every night, and made no excursions into the interior. All negotiations with the chiefs failed, and the Niger returned *via* the Diaka, or western branch of the river, hitherto unexplored. A vast amount of ethnographical and other valuable information was obtained, and a detailed survey of this part of the Niger's course was executed.

DERIVATION OF THE NAME CONGO.—According to Herr Jankó, the name "Congo" is identical with "Songo," and also with "Rongo," and signifies a "spear" in the speech of the Kijangi. The Bakongo were the first people who applied this name to the river, and it is certain that they came from the north and that their language has altered considerably since they separated from their northern progenitors. As it would be easier for a new people to adopt a name already given than to make a new one, it is probable that though in Kijanyi Congo means a spear, in the remainder of the Bantu tongues the word has somewhat changed its original signification, and become a proper name. Bakongo means "a man with a lance," and thus the river name may be interpreted to mean "quick as a lance."

J. MENGES' JOURNEY SOUTHWARD FROM KASSALA.—J. Menges publishes an account (Petermann's *Mitt.*) of his journey between Kassala and the Setit. The very existence of Kassala depends upon the commerce with the countries to the south of it. Two caravan routes conduct southwards. One of these follows the Atbara as far as Tomat, and then crosses the steppe to Kedarif. The second goes directly from Kassala to the Setit, passing by the imposing granite mountain of Kassala.

The people of these regions, belonging to the tribes Homran, Dabaina, and Schukpieh, dwell in the dry season on the borders of

the rivers or in market towns like Kedarif. The character of the three rivers Setit, Athara and Basalam is everywhere the same; their flood plains are some 90 metres below the barren soil of the plateau, and they are themselves from 120 to 300 metres wide, and about 15 metres deep.

AUSTRALIA.—Dr. K. V. Lendenfeld (Petermann's *Mitt.*, 1888) states that the influence of forests upon the climate of Australia is the reverse of that which they are supposed to exercise in Europe. While European trees retain much of the water among their roots, the plants of the Australian wastes, including the grasses, Eucalypti and the Spinifex, send their roots to great depths in search of water, and appear to open their stomata only at night.

Dr. Lendenfeld asserts that during his journeys in the interior of New South Wales he has many times travelled all day through forests without seeing grass. The soil, for the most part consisting of red loam, is flat and smooth as asphalt, and hard as stone, forming a marked contrast to that of European forests. When it rains in such a forest the greater part of the water runs off into the hollows at once. As many of these water-holes have a subterranean communication with the sea, no great lakes are formed. The greatest river in Australia, the Murray, is navigable only in winter by flat-bottomed steamboats. In many places where squatters have destroyed the forests the bare soil becomes clothed with so many kinds of grass as to afford subsistence for a thousand sheep where a hundred fed previously.

Mr. S. Brooke (Petermann's *Mitt.*, 1888) describes the recent excursion of himself and his brother in Western Australia, and gives a map of their route. The whole region is lacking in water, yet has numerous plants. The soil is calcareous, with a few mountains and granite rocks rising from the plains. Among these is Mount Rugged, which is about 1,980 feet high and three miles long.

AMERICA.—Among valuable maps recently issued are those contained in the work of Sr. J. Albarracin, a member of the last Argentine exploring expedition in Patagonia, and showing the courses of the Negro, Limay and Collon-Cura and the Lake Nahuel-Huapi, of which the Limay is the outlet. This lake is 583 metres above the sea, and its shape is different from that originally reported.

The Argentine Republic in general may be said to consist of the flat Pampas and of the Cordilleras, but there are also subordinate chains which rise out of the Pampas, and others in front of the main Cordillera. The Pampas incline towards the southeast, and some of the peaks which rise in their midst reach a considerable

height, as, for example, Nevado de Famatina (6,024 metres) and Nevada de Aconquija (5,400 m.): toward the south these Pampas sierras diminish in height.

The province of Santa Fe (Argentine Republic), according to the census of June 8, 1887, now contains 220,332 inhabitants, against 187,000 in 1869. The municipality of Córdoba, a square of 26 kilometres on each side, contained in October of the same year 66,247 souls, while in 1869 it had but 34,458. Buenos Ayres has now a population of 424,873, and Rosaria 50,914.

GEOGRAPHICAL NEWS.—ALGERIA.—The last census (1886) of Algeria gives a population of 3,752,196, being an increase of nearly half a million above the population in 1881. Of this increase 24,209 are Frenchmen, and nearly 22,000 natives of other European countries. There has been an influx of more than 17,000 Moroccans into Algeria, while Mohammedan-French subjects have increased from 2,842,497 to 3,264,481.

According to Mr. N. J. Dixon, the population of the various States of Colombia is as follows: Boyaca, 483,874; Cauca, 435,690; Santander, 423,427; Cundinamarca, 409,602; Antioquia, 365,974; Bolivar, 300,000; Tolima, 230,821; Panama, 220,600; and Magdalena, 85,255; making a total of 2,955,243.

GEOLOGY AND PALÆONTOLOGY.

NOTES ON THE ROCKFORD SHALES.—The lithological and palæontological characters of the Rockford shales of Iowa differ considerably at different localities.

For example, the shales which are seen at the south exposure at Owens Grove, Cerro Gordo county, differ conspicuously, in many respects, in their lithological and palæontological characters, from the same beds observed at other localities.¹ The differentiation of the fauna at this place is strongly marked. The three species of *Pachyphyllum*² which occur at Hackberry and Rockford, are here replaced by a new species of this genus.

¹ For a detailed description of the Rockford Shales, and the limestone which immediately underlie them, reference may be made to a paper by the author, on "Contributions to the Knowledge of the Devonian Fauna of Iowa, with a Description of the Rockford Shales," now in press by the Davenport Academy of Science.

² In a paper, now in the hands of the printer, the author has described three new species of this genus.